EMBARGOED UNTIL AFTER THE BILL PASSES THE HOUSE THIS EVENING

Istook Secures $1.4 million for U.S. Border Protection Training Center
Oklahoma City facility to train of border pilots protecting U.S./Mexico border

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Ernest Istook (R-OK) today announced that the U.S. Customs National Aviation Center (CNAC) based in Oklahoma City is poised to step up its role in stemming the flow of illegal immigrants into the United States. CNAC is slated to receive a $1.4 million to conduct a computer based training program for pilots charged with patrolling the U.S./Mexico border.

"The CNAC can now use computer simulators to train pilots, much like they do in the military," says Istook. "This program also cuts down on aircraft expenses and allows pilot trainees to learn a tough job without the fear of making mistakes that might cause an accident."

Istook pushed for funding the program as a member of the Homeland Security subcommittee, which had its budget overwhelmingly approved by the full House late Thursday evening.

The Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2006 (H.R. 2360) provides $19.1 billion for border protection and immigration enforcement, an increase of more than $1 billion than budgeted for this year.

"The safety and security of the American people is our top priority and the first thing we need to do is shore up our borders," added Istook. "This bill provides for more than 1,000 new Border Patrol Agents as well as cutting edge technology used to screen high-risk cargo making their way through our ports and other commercial checkpoints."

The bill also includes:

- $138.8 million for the Container Security Initiative, supporting security efforts in foreign ports.
- $135 million for transportation and removal of illegal immigrants.
- $41 million for increased border security technology.
- $54.3 million for Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism
- $45 million for increased intelligence targeting high risk cargo and passengers.

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